Progress For Connecticut Women





Highlights of the Accomplishments of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

he Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) was created in 1973 by an act of the Connecticut General Assembly. Under Sections 46a-1 through 46a-6 of the Connecticut General Statutes, a seventeen-member Commission is appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate. Commissioners, staff and volunteers work with elected officials and the public to eliminate sex discrimination in Connecticut.

Co-Chairs of the Judiciary committee and ranking minority members also serve on the Commission.

The Commission shall conduct an ongoing study of all matters concerning women and in furtherance of that responsibility shall

- (a) Inform leaders of business, education, state and local government and the communications media of the nature and scope of the problem of sex discrimination, with a view to enlisting their support in working toward improvement;
- (b) Serve as a liaison between government and private interest groups concerned with services for women;
- (c) Promote consideration of qualified women for all levels of government position;
- (d) Oversee coordination and assess programs and practices in all state agencies as they affect women.

 C.S.G. Sec. 46a-4

*Excerpt from Section 46a, Chapter 812 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

"To accomplish its statutory obligation, the Commission had to challenge the status quo over and over again. It had to ask unpopular questions and raise everyone's consciousness about inequality."

Governor Ella T. Grasso, 1977

"...The PCSW has been critical to the progress women have made in Connecticut...Its ability to work effectively with the elected representatives of both parties, has enabled it to serve women magnificently. They have worked in areas that have significantly touched the lives of women."

Congresswoman Nancy L. Johnson, Sixth District, 1984

"The Connecticut Department of Labor recognizes the importance of educating women about the resources available to gain experience and training for nontradition occupations which will lead to higher paying jobs. We continue to work with our partners, including the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, to carry out our longstanding commitment to increase the number of nontraditional occupation opportunities for women."

Commissioner Shaun Cashman Connecticut Department of Labor, 2002

Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

2003
Commission Members
Tanya Meck, Chair
Susan O. Storey, Vice-Chair
Anne Dailey, Treasurer
Ann Clark, Secretary
Mildred Bauzá
Marcia A. Cavanaugh
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Cindy R. Slane
Patricia E.M. Whitcombe

Legislative Members

Co-Chairs of the Judiciary committee and ranking minority members also serve on the Commission

Staff Members

Leslie J. Brett, Ph.D., Executive Director Susan H. Hoover, Special Projects Director Barbara Potopowitz, Public Information Officer Natasha M. Pierre, JD, MSW, Legislative Analyst Rosemary Lopez, Secretary to the Executive Director Sarah Grabill, Public Information Assistant Lillie Wright, Administrative Assistant Jacquelyn Slamon, NEW Program Manager

Our History

1973	. 🗸	The CT General Assembly passes, and Governor Thomas Meskill signs into law, Public Act 73-559, establishing the PCSW.
	~	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: An act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex or marital status in credit transactions; An act guaranteeing the rights of pregnant workers; An act prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex or marital status in public accommodations.
1974	~	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: An act requiring all state agencies, boards and commissions to develop affirmative action plans; and A state equal rights amendment.
	V	The PCSW conducts a major study for the purpose of sex-neutralizing the language in the Connecticut General Statutes.
1975	~	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: Legislation establishing the Office of Child Day Care. The PCSW establishes a Family Law Task Force.
1976	~	The PCSW begins work with the State Personnel Department and the State Police to improve the recruitment and retention of women in the State Police.
	V	The Family Law Task Force of the Commission recommends research on the state's marital property statutes.
1977	✓	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: A change in the state's "loitering statute," making it gender neutral to allow Connecticut women to stand in bars; and a law which includes domestic workers under the state minimum wage law.
	V	The PCSW conducts an investigation into the problems of women employed in clerical positions.
	V	The PCSW works with the Connecticut Task Force on Abused Women in support of legislation that establishes a pilot program of emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence.
	V	The first edition of Women's Job Rights and How to Use Them is published.

1978 The PCSW publishes: Great Women in Connecticut History, and Clerical Work: A Manual for Change. The PCSW works with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities and the Department of Labor to develop regulations that bring Connecticut into compliance with new federal laws requiring affirmative action for women in apprenticeships. The PCSW begins work toward the establishment of Displaced Homemaker programs. 1979 The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: The passage of the law allowing pregnant workers in hazardous jobs to transfer to a safe job for the duration of the pregnancy. The PCSW begins to explore the concept of "equal pay for work of comparable worth." The General Assembly requires an objective job evaluation study of state service jobs. The PCSW publishes its first study of divorce in Connecticut: *Marital* Dissolution: The Economic Impact in Connecticut on Men and Women. The PCSW works to establish a vocational training program at Niantic Correctional Institution for women in nontraditional occupations. The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly 1980 concerning: A law defining and prohibiting sexual harassment under the state's **Unfair Employment Practices Act**; The PCSW establishes a Minority Women's Task Force to focus on the particular problems of women confronting the double impact of race and sex discrimination. The PCSW conducts a survey of 200 employers and unions and finds 66% of the respondents indicate an interest in business-based child-care. Nontraditional Jobs for Women: A Resource Guide for Connecticut Women and Career Counselors is published.

1981 The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: A law extending tax credits to businesses for the establishment of child-care for their employees; A law that defines discrimination on the basis of pregnancy to include discrimination related to child-bearing capacity, sterilization, fertility, or related medical conditions. The PCSW, the Office of Child Day Care and the Department of Economic Development hold the first conference on industry-based child-care in Connecticut. The PCSW, in conjunction with the State Department of Labor, is successful in the implementation of pre-apprenticeship training programs. 1982 Special Act 82-41 establishes a committee to study employment and training opportunities for recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The PCSW guides the work for this committee. The PCSW publishes *Out of Poverty*, a report recommending a state initiative to expand employment and training opportunities for recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The PCSW completes a technical assistance project to increase the number of women in apprenticeships. More than 100 names of women are added to the Labor Department roster of persons interested in becoming apprentices. The PCSW provides technical assistance to the City of Hartford and Personnel Departments to recruit women for the position of firefighter. Two women enter the academy, complete training and become the first female municipal firefighters in the state. 1983 PCSW serves on the committee established by the legislature to develop recommendations concerning education, training and employment opportunities for applicants and recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The PCSW becomes the Secretariat for the Child Support Enforcement Task

1984 The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly

service on state Boards. Councils and Commissions.

An act establishing a Demonstration Supportive Work Employment Program for Applicants and Recipients of AFDC; and an act concerning AFDC Employment, Education and Training.

The PCSW develops a Talent Bank of qualified women interested in

	V	Crossing Bridges: A Guide for Displaced Homemakers and Other Women In Transition is published, listing resources for displaced homemakers and other women in need.
	V	The PCSW sponsors a conference for police and fire chiefs and publishes the manual <i>How to Recruit and Retain Women Police Officers and Firefighters</i> .
	\checkmark	The PCSW publishes Opening New Doors for Women: a Step by Step Guide to Recruiting and Retaining Women for Nontraditional Jobs.
	~	The PCSW publishes <i>Facts about the Status of Connecticut Women</i> , which is pursuant to Public Act 84-14, An Act Concerning the Distribution of Information of Job Sharing for State Employees and Teachers.
1985	V	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: An act concerning family leave law in the United States.
	✓	The PCSW, in coalition with the Commission on the Status of Hartford Women, the Institute for Community Research, Hispanic Health Council and Connecticut Black Women's Education and Research Foundation, begins to develop a proposal for funding of the Urban Women's Development Project. This will train inner city women in computer skills, information collection and policy formulation.
	~	The PCSW researches and plans an exhibit of over 150 items representing the history of Connecticut women, as principal sponsor of the Connecticut Women's History Project.
	~	SAGE, the Committee for State Action on Gender Equity, is formed with the State Board of Education to assist in the achievement of equal educational opportunities regardless of gender.
1988	✓	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: Legislative proposals contained in the family and work place package; 16 of the 17 are enacted into law; The establishment of the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations, on which the PCSW serves.
	~	The PCSW staffs and serves on the task force to study the conditions of the Niantic Correctional Institution for Women.
	~	The PCSW conducts a survey of state Boards, Councils and Commissions to determine gender and race composition.
	~	The PCSW works with the Department of Transportation on the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise certification panel to help ensure access for women and people of color to state sponsored construction jobs.

color to state sponsored construction jobs.



With grants from the Department of Labor and the Department of Education, the PCSW develops the Women in Nontraditional Occupations Project.

1989



The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

A Family and Medical Leave Law covering certain employees in the private sector.



The PCSW releases several new publications:

Why Not? A statewide directory of men and women who are employed in and willing to mentor in nontraditional occupations;

Women in Apprenticeships, a guide to apprenticeships for women in nontraditional occupations;

Building a Strong Workplace: An employers' guide to recruiting and retaining women in nontraditional occupations

Women, Children and the Criminal Justice System, a summary of findings and recommendations for the task force on women, children and the criminal justice system.

1990



The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

The passage of one of the most progressive laws in the country concerningwomen's reproductive rights.



The PCSW publishes:

Women and Children Beware: the Economic Consequences of Divorce in Connecticut, a summary of findings.

24 Hour Help: a statewide resource guide for emergency services. Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, a guide for identifying and dealing with sexual harassment.



Women in the Trades, the first conference for women in nontraditional occupations in Connecticut, is held.



The Women in Nontraditional Occupations Project begins support groups for women in several cities, and coordinates a community service project building a playscape for a battered women's shelter.



The PCSW sponsors a forum on sexual assault with representatives from the advocacy and public policy arenas.

1991



The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

The successful repeal of the state's outdated adultery law.

	~	The PCSW begins planning for a colloquium on sexual assault to be held in conjunction with the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, and starts an awareness campaign.
	V	The PCSW, joins with the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF), Legal Aid Society of Hartford, and Parents for the Enforcement of Court Ordered Child Support in starting a public education campaign on child support enforcement.
	V	A survey on women working in highway construction is conducted in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and UCONN Center for Social Inquiry.
1992	~	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: An act concerning Sexual Harassment Education and Training in the Workplace, which requires employers with 50 or more employees to train supervisors about sexual harassment;
	~	The PCSW participates in the Governor's task force on Sexual Violence, the Gender Bias and the Courts Implementation Task Force, and the Jobs Advisory Council.
	V	The PCSW forms the Connecticut Women's Agenda, to promote cooperation among leaders from many women's organizations.
	V	The PCSW and the Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS) propose a state task force on sexual assault, which is convened in 1992.
1993	~	The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning: An act concerning the gender and racial composition of membership of state boards, commissions, committees and councils; Amendments to the sexual assault statutes, including the criminalization of sexual conduct between a therapist and a patient and the criteria for statutory rape.
	~	The PCSW organizes a major conference, "American Women and Leadership: From Grassroots to Global" as part of the celebration of its 20th anniversary.
	~	The PCSW publishes an update of the <i>Connecticut Women's Directory</i> with over 500 listings.
	~	The PCSW, along with the UCONN School of Social Work and CONNSACS, conducts a survey of sexual harassment in Connecticut's high schools.

1994



The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

An act strengthening child support enforcement;

An act requiring insurance companies to provide coverage for the removal of breast implants;

Teen pregnancy programs.



The PCSW develops a list of women qualified to fill vacancies on the federal bench for use by the Connecticut congressional delegation.



The PCSW convenes the Connecticut Women's Health Campaign, which develops ten principles critical to quality and equity in health care for women.



The 5th annual Women in the Trades Conference is held.



The PCSW facilitates the "Working Women Count" survey of the U.S. Department of Labor and Women's Bureau to gather and analyze information about the issues affecting working women in America.



The PCSW plays an active role in the Commission on the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations. A new forensic evidence kit is developed along with forms that will allow for effective prosecution and conviction.



The PCSW joins the efforts of the Department of Consumer Protection, The Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Centers before the Department of Public Utilities regarding privacy issues for victims of domestic violence with respect to Missed Call Dialing, a new service offered by the Southern New England Telephone Company.





The PCSW provides research, analysis and testimony to the General Assembly concerning:

An act concerning direct access to Obstetrician and Gynecologist services;

An act concerning child support and custody which allows professional, occupational or driver's license to be taken away from an obligor who is 90 days delinquent;

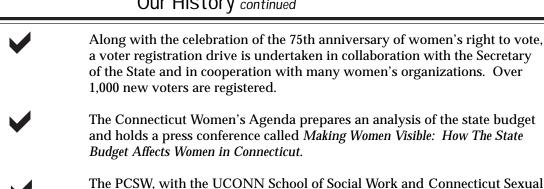
An act concerning stalking to strengthen the current law.



The PCSW convenes the *Connecticut Women's Economic Summit* in Hartford with over 300 people in attendance to discuss the economic status of women in the state.



PCSW and the Order of Women Legislators (OWLS) co-sponsors a community forum called *Back from Beijing*. Participants of the 4th United Nations Conference on Women and the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Forum in Huarou, China report their experiences.



1996 The PCSW provides information and research to the General Assembly concerning:

Sexual Harassment in Connecticut's High Schools.

An act to increase funding for early breast cancer prevention and treatment by providing underinsured women with free mammograms and pap tests;

Assault Crisis Centers publishes a report entitled, In Our Own Backyard,

An act requiring health insurance plans to cover a minimum of 48 hours hospital stay for normal childbirth and 96 hours for Cesarean section.

The PCSW establishes advisory councils in each of the six Congressional Districts to increase awareness among the commissioners and staff on issues that affect the status of women in Connecticut.

> The PCSW begins filming the cable show PCSW Presents..., a half hour show designed to educate women around the state about the programs, legislation and other issues that affect their lives.

The PCSW hosts Take Our Daughters To Work Day for hundreds of girls and boys, featuring many women legislators speaking about their personal experiences as elected officials.

The PCSW and the CT Department of Labor are awarded a federal grant to develop a "best practices" training program to help women gain employment in the trades and other nontraditional occupations.

The PCSW provides analysis and research to the General Assembly concerning:

> An act requiring insurance programs to provide coverage for a minimum of 48 hours following a mastectomy;

An act providing that prohibition of public breast-feeding is a form of discrimination;

An act establishing a check-off box on the state income tax form through which individuals may voluntarily designate an extra contribution to a new Breast Cancer Research and Education

An act concerning discrimination by golf country clubs on the basis of gender and other factors;

1997



An act prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in public schools;

An act facilitating the enforcement across state lines of restraining and protective orders.



The PCSW organizes the Women's Economic Development Initiative (WEDI), an organization consisting of experts, business owners and policy makers to focus attention on women and small businesses.



With the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, the PCSW holds several forums focused on Latina women in the workplace issues.



The PCSW conducts research with students from Yale about women with disabilities in New Haven who have experienced domestic violence. More than two thirds of the respondents report some type of abuse.



The PCSW partners with the Women's Health Division of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to complete the successful pilot program entitled *Women's Health—Take Time to Care*, a program aimed at fostering wise medicine-taking practices.



The PCSW, in partnership with the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor and the Connecticut Department of Labor implement Nontraditional Employment for Women initiatives throughout the state's employment and training services.





The PCSW provides information and research to the General Assembly concerning:

An act prohibiting employment discrimination based on the results of genetic testing;

An act increasing the opportunities for welfare recipients and other workers to receive education and training combined with work;

An act concerning the discriminatory practice complaint procedure of the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;



The Women's Economent Development Initiative project of the PCSW works with the Small Business Set-Aside program to streamline the paperwork required for certification and increase opportunities for women business owners to do business with the state of Connecticut.



The PCSW participates in the Girls and Technology Network, to increase the number of young girls who pursue education in technology.



The PCSW unveils its new website, which provides immediate access to information regarding the Commission, facts and policies affecting the status of women.

1999



The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

An act requiring health insurers to cover prescription birth control; An act establishing a micro-loan guarantee program for womenowned businesses and minority owned businesses;

An act creating an osteoporosis education awareness advisory council:

An act extending unemployment compensation eligibility domestic violence victims.



PCSW increases its outreach by publishing the brochures: Who We Area and What We Do (in English and Spanish)
The PCSW Talent Bank
The PCSW Internship Program
The Women's Economic Development Initiative
in addition to its regular publications.



More than 250 women and employers attend the 10th annual *Women in the Trades and Nontraditional Occupations Conference.*



The PCSW conducts two seminars entitled, *How to Be Appointed to State Boards and Commissions* and increases the Talent Bank of women interested in state boards and commissions to over 200 members.



WEDI sponsors the first *Connecticut Women Entrepreneurs' Day*, to connect women business owners with state resources.



The Nontraditional Employment for Women Project develops a training program to prepare women to enter state registered apprenticeships and other nontraditional occupations and graduates 26 women in its inaugural year.





The PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

An act authorizing the government to study the costs and benefits of paid family and medical leave;

An act concerning access to post-secondary education and job training.



WEDI works with the State Library Association to produce a video entitled Starting and Growing A Small Business—Choices for Success.



PCSW partners with the Center for Policy Alternatives on *Women's Voices 2000*, a polling project which surveyed women and men about issues they felt were important during the election year.



PSCW sponsors a research project with Yale students to learn how uninsured women meet their health care needs. Results showed that these women would offen postpone seeking medical care and do without prescription medications.

2001



The PCSW provides research to analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

An act concerning education and equitable wages for early childhood education professionals;

An act concerning medical care for women with breast or cervical cancer:

An act concerning health insurance coverage for cancer clinical trials:

An act concerning breastfeeding in the workplace;

An act providing for a statue of Prudence Crandall for the state Capitol building.



With the help of the PCSW, the first women in history is appointed to the Connecticut Electrical Licensing Board.



The sixth Annual *Making Women Visible Day* and press conference is held jointly with the Connecticut Women's Agenda (CWA). PCSW announces a multi-year initiative to address the wage gap.



The PCSW partners with the CT Valley Girl Scouts to sponsor a *Teen Life Conference* where more than 300 high school girls learn about computers, academics, financial aspects of entering college and how to sustain healthy relationships.



The WEDI project of the PCSW and the Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO-CT) conducts a survey of women business owners relating to public policy issues.



PCSW conducts its first Public Hearing in New London regarding the economic status of workers in the caregiving professions.

2002



PCSW provides research and analysis to the General Assembly concerning:

An act concerning educational support orders;

An act concerning the self-sufficiency measurement for the state of Connecticut:

An act requiring the provision of coverage for smoking cessation under the Medicaid program.



The PCSW conducts a statewide survey of women and men with the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut regarding policies and concerns that directly affect working parents and the status of women.



The Economic Status of Workers in Caregiving Professions is published. This Public Hearing Report captures the information and comments from workers, employers and member of the community who testified before the PCSW.



The PCSW provides comprehensive technical assistance and training to the Connecticut Department of Correction to help them address sexual harassment. Over the past five years, the PCSW has provided sexual harassment prevention training to 4,964 state employees.



The PCSW appears before the Attorney General and the office of Health Care Access in proceedings regarding the purchase of Sharon Hospital. Testimony is given regarding the access of women and reproductive health care services in the region.

Current publications available are:

Annual Legislative Summary, detailing the Commission's legislative agenda for the prior year and summarizing the outcome of bills that affect the status of women.

Annual Report, detailing the Commission's activities during the calendar year, including legislative work, PCSW special projects and public information.

A Directory of Women's Organizations in Connecticut, listing women's organizations in Connecticut and contacts at those organizations. Updated in alternate years.

Continuing Progress for Connecticut Women, highlighting the accomplishments of the PCSW and women and girls in Connecticut over the past 30 years.

Facts About the Status of Women in Connecticut, providing statistical information about the status of women in the state. Updates from 1985.

PCSW brochures, Who We are and What We Do, Internship Program, The Talent Bank, Congressional District Advisory Councils, Women-Owned Business Project.

PCSW Website, with information about PCSW activities, legislative action and important developments affecting women. Log on to www.cga.state.ct.us/PCSW/

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Consultants, listing individuals and companies offering sexual harassment prevention training throughout Connecticut and New England; a joint publication with the CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Talent Bank Listing, containing information about women interested in serving on governmental boards and commissions

The Economic Status of Workers in Caregiving Professions, summarizing the testimony given at hearings conducted by the PCSW.

Fact Sheets on the status of women.

Publications on Women In Nontraditional Occupations

Building a Strong Workforce, an employer's guide to recruiting and retaining women in nontraditional occupations.

Nontraditional Jobs for Women: A Resource Guide for Counselors and Women in Connecticut, describing various resources for women interested in entering nontraditional occupations.

Nontraditional Occupations Information Packet, providing information about apprenticeship programs and about the Nontraditional Occupations Project at the PCSW.

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Permanent Commission on the Status of Women

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